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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, G-2, INTELLIGENCE  
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14 SEP 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR: EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NATIONAL ESTIMATES BOARD,  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SUBJECT: NIE-42: The Current Situation in Albania with  
Particular Reference to Greek, Yugoslav, and  
Italian Interests and Pretensions

1. Reference is made to CIA memorandum, subject as above,  
dated 20 August 1951.

2. In accordance with request contained in reference  
memorandum, attached is the Department of the Army contribution  
to NIE-42, prepared by the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff,  
G-2, Intelligence, Department of the Army.

FOR THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, G-2

*Hamilton H. H. H.*

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2. INCL 2  
3. INCL 3

1 Incl  
Army Contribution  
to NIE-42 (8 cys)

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G-2 Contribution to NIE-42: "The Current Situation in Albania with Particular Reference to Greek Yugoslav, and Italian Interests and Pretensions".

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I. WHAT IS THE CURRENT INTERNAL SITUATION IN ALBANIA?

A. Is the Hoxha regime firmly established in Albania?

1. -----

2. Are the police and armed forces under firm political control?

Information regarding the situation in Albania following the bomb explosion at the Soviet Legation in Tirana on 19 February 51 is scanty, but it is believed that political control of the police and armed forces, which was firm before the bombing incident, has become even more strict. This control is exercised by the Prime Minister, General of the Army Enver Hoxha, and the Minister of Interior, and former Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Mehmet Shehu. These two officers control the Army and police respectively, and are themselves subject to the direction of the Soviet Military Mission to Albania. To further insure careful political control, one of the two Vice Ministers of People's Defense is a Soviet citizen who has the additional title of Political Director of the Armed Forces. This officer directs the activities of the political advisors (or agents) who are attached to even the smallest units of the Albanian Army, the Security Forces and the Police.

B. To what extent does the regime's existence depend on Soviet support?

1. -----

2. There are no known military treaties or mutual defense pacts in existence between the USSR and Albania, such as were concluded by the Soviets with other Satellites; nor are there any such pacts known to exist between Albania and the other satellites except a mutual assistance pact concluded with Bulgaria on 16 December 1947. Recent reports indicate that Soviet representatives in Albania carefully avoid making official declarations which might be interpreted as formal pledges to support Albania in case of need. This course is

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followed in spite of obvious efforts by the Albanian Government officials to encourage such pledges. There are no indications, however, that the USSR has any intention of abandoning Albania in the event of war.

There are no known political agreements between Albania and the USSR or its Satellites, although there are trade agreements with most of the Satellites and Cultural Pacts have been concluded with some of the Satellites.

C. What resistance to the regime exists and how effective is it?

1. The Enver Hoxha Stalinist regime enjoys the genuine support of only a portion of the 30,000 members of the Albanian Worker's Party, and the overwhelming majority of the country's population is opposed to it. The regime is able to maintain itself in power by strict control of all means of subsistence and by police terror, but despite such deterrents there are small, poorly organized resistance groups scattered about Albania, particularly in the north. These are believed to be independent in nature, and relatively inactive. Within their specific localities these groups engage in occasional acts of minor sabotage, usually as protest measures. This sort of resistance to any central government has traditionally existed in Albania, and would very likely continue should the Hoxha regime be overthrown and any other central government be established.

2. There is little or no cooperation between individual resistance groups sufficient to merit consideration. The Albanians are a tribal people, with a long history of inter-tribal blood feuds. Inasmuch as the limited resistance activities which take place are carried on within the tribal structure, the long-standing rivalries make cooperation difficult.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. For the most part, attempts on the part of the emigre movements to coordinate activities with internal resistance groups have been abortive, and no significant liaison exists at the present time. Probably the most prominent emigre group is the Committee for a Free Albania which is located in Rome, and is believed to receive at least

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part of its operational funds from the Italian Government. While this group is somewhat more forceful, better organized and more intellectually inclined than other similar groups, its effectiveness is limited by poor leadership, lack of a well-defined policy, and lack of firm contact with resistance elements within Albania.

The Yugoslavs recently sponsored the organization in the Koemet area of Yugoslavia, near the Albanian border, of the League of Albanian Political Refugees, but for the time being this group is not being encouraged to actively antagonize the Hoxha regime. The Greeks do not specifically support any organized emigre movement at the present time.

Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece are minimizing their assistance to emigre groups for two reasons:

1) The emigre groups are numerous and continually at cross-purposes. Until they come to terms among themselves, present a common front, and have a definite plan for liberated Albania, they represent a poor investment, and are useful only insofar as they contribute toward keeping Albania in a state of mild disturbance, in opposition to the Hoxha regime.

2) None of the countries wishes to threaten the Hoxha regime and thus provide the USSR with a pretext either for aggression in southeastern Europe; or for an accelerated military build-up of Albania.

II. DO THE INTERESTS OF YUGOSLAVIA, GREECE AND ITALY IN ALBANIA CONFLICT AND, IF SO, TO WHAT EXTENT?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

III. ASSUMING THAT THE HOXHA REGIME RETAINS POWER IN ALBANIA, ARE CONFLICTING INTERESTS OF ITALY, YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE IN ALBANIA OBSTACLES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE DEFENSE OF SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE AND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN?

A. For the effective defense of southeastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean while the Hoxha regime retains power in Albania,

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complete cooperation between Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece is highly desirable. Military plans and operations should be thoroughly integrated to present a common front and the defense economies of the three countries should be adjusted on a mutually beneficial basis. In order to accomplish these objectives, it will be initially necessary to effect an ideological rapprochement between the three countries. This would pave the way for joint defensive measures and, possibly, formal mutual assistance agreements.

B. There are no steps being taken at present to coordinate the defense plans of Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece. The present state of relations between Italy and Yugoslavia over the disposal of the Trieste problem makes such plans unlikely for the time being. With regard to Greece and Yugoslavia, however, there have been recent vague indications that the two countries might be willing to exchange vital defense information, provided certain conditions were met by each party concerned. To date nothing has come of this.

C. Albania in hostile hands necessitates some diversion of Yugoslav and Greek troops to the Albanian border, thereby reducing the troop strength and materiel available for defense of other border areas. In effect, the situation requires both Yugoslavia and Greece to plan a two-front defense. With regard to Italy, which has no common border with Albania, naval planning is particularly affected.

The formulation of defensive plans by Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy must take into account the facts that:

- 1) In Albania the USSR has a base from which aggressive naval warfare -- particularly submarine warfare -- could be conducted against all three countries, as well as against the entire Mediterranean area;
- 2) Albania could serve as a Soviet air base for limited offensive operations;

D. The primary goal of Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia in Albania at the present time is to remove it from Soviet domination, thereby reducing the Communist threat to themselves. Thus, the present

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military plans of the three countries in so far as Albania is concerned, are in general, although unspecified, agreement. Their conflicting interests and pretensions, which would complicate the Albanian problem should the Hoxha regime be overthrown, have assumed a secondary position by tacit agreement of the three powers, and as no joint defense plans have yet been established for Southeastern Europe, their intentions vis-a-vis Albania may be expected to continue in the background for the time being. It must also be considered a possibility that with the step-up in the Western defense efforts and the more active participation of Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece in such efforts, the complications resulting from the divergent interests of the three countries in Albania will be solved within the Western defense structure.

IV. ASSUMING THAT THE HOXHA REGIME IS OVERTHROWN, WHAT EFFECT WILL POSSIBLE CONFLICTING INTERESTS OF ITALY, YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE HAVE ON THE SECURITY OF THAT AREA?

A. -----

B. What changes in the relations of the three countries would be caused by the replacement of the Hoxha regime?

1. Should the Hoxha regime be replaced by a government friendly to the West, it would be possible for Yugoslavia and Greece to de-emphasize the defense of their borders with Albania, and redistribute their military strength. Italy would be in a position to revise her naval planning with a view to assuming for the West, domination of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean passage between Italy and Tunisia. The logistic problems for all three countries would be lessened should the threat of Soviet interference in the Mediterranean be removed.

It would be necessary to provide concrete assistance from outside to any new regime in Albania, particularly with regard to arms and equipment which presently are being obtained from the USSR.

2. If either Italy, Yugoslavia or Greece obtained a dominant interest in a new Albanian regime, cooperation between the countries undoubtedly would be obstructed, but if they participated equally in assisting the new regime or all agreed to forego interference of any

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kind, military and political cooperation would be facilitated.

C. The development of an effective coordinated defense of Southeastern Europe and the Mediterranean would be affected by any change in the Albanian regime. Should any one country seek or achieve control of Albania, the other interested nations undoubtedly would delay, and perhaps make impossible, any effective cooperation toward a mutual defense. If the West could secure Albanian neutrality under joint Western domination, the final decision on Albania could be deferred and the coordinated defense of the area facilitated. The threat of Soviet aggression from a base in Albania would be removed and Southeastern Europe would be capable of consolidating politically and militarily in the defense of the area against aggression. Albania, under Soviet domination, complicates the development of an effective Western defense of Southeastern Europe, and thus is of military value to the USSR. It would not have a comparable value to the Western powers, should Albania be aligned with the West. Albania could offer little to the West in the form of port facilities and airfields, and the Albanian ground forces would constitute a negligible addition to the troops available for defense of the area.

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